(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Telephone facilities in villages

†1832. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in the country not connected with telephone facility at present;

(b) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has asked all the telephone service companies to deposit five per cent of their net revenue in the social service companies to provide telephone facilities in the remaining and remote villages;

(c) if so, whether T.R.A.I. has fixed any time-limit for the same; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, The number of villages not connected with telephone facility at present is 1,93,063.

(b) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended 5 % of the Adjusted Gross Revenue to be charged as Universal Service Levy from all Telecom carriers or operators, excluding pure value added service providers such as Internet Service Providers, Voice Mail Service Providers, etc. which should be credited to a Universal Service Fund. This levy should come out of the license fee itself and should not be an additional levy. Provision of Village Public Telephones and Direct Exchange Lines in rural and remote areas shall be undertaken by all Basic Service Operators who will be reimbursed from this fund.

(c) and (d) The TRAI has recommended the date of implementation of Universal Service Support Scheme to be 1.4.2002,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

after which utilization of the fund would commence. The TRAI has further recommended that both Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and private Basic Service Operators be directed to give highest priority to the installation of Village Public Telephone in all villages by 31.3.2002 as engvisaged in NTP-99.

PMG Office at Jabalpur

†1833. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the stand taken by Government over the demand of opening of a PMG Office at Jabalpur;

(b) whether any proposal is pending in this regard; and

(c) whether opening of a PMG Office at Jabalpur would be an appropriate step?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Keeping in view various factors such as administrative interest, the workload involved and financial considerations, there is no justification at present for opening a PMG's Office at Jabalpur. There is also no proposal pending in this regard.

Dues from cellular companies

1834. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount due from the cellular companies, companies-wise; and

(b) what steps have been taken to recover the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, a sum of

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